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Message Text

SECRET

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41
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
---------- 039328
R 211225Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5451
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
CINCPAC
COMUSSAG

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 4205

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: MILI, CB
SUBJECT: FURTHER EFFORTS TO GET MEN TO FANK COMBAT UNITS

REF: A) PHNOM PENH 2638
B) PHNOM PENH 2639
C) PHNOM PENH 3734

1. SUMMARY. WE MET SEPARATELY DURING PAST FOUR DAYS WITH FANK CINC AND HIS STAFF AND WITH PRIME MINISTER, KEY CABINET OFFICIALS AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS TO PRESS FOR NEW EFFORTS TO SPEED FLOW OF MEN TO INTERVENTION UNITS. SEVERAL DECISIONS WERE TAKEN WHICH SHOULD FACILITATE REASSIGNMENT OF UNESSENTIAL FANK PERSONNEL TO FRONT LINE UNITS (NOW PROCEEDING AT UNACCEPTABLY LOW RATE), CONSCRIPTION ORGANIZATION'S EXPLOITATION OF CENSUS (WHICH HAS ADDED AT LEAST AN ESTIMATED 20,000 DRAFT ELIGIBLE MEN TO CITY'S ROLLS), AND BETTER ACCESS TO PROVINCIAL MANPOWER POOLS. AS A RESULT OF EARLIER PRESSURES, MANPOWER FLOW IS UP TO 500 A WEEK FROM CONSCRIPTION. WITH THESE NEW DECISIONS A 1,000 A WEEK FLOW (INCLUDED REASSIGNMENTS FROM HEADQUARTERS AND TERRITORIALS) SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. THAT WOULD FULLY OFFSET CURRENT GENERAL RESERVE LOSSES. CONTINUED HIGH LEVEL PRESSURES WILL, HOWEVER, QUITE CLEARLY BE REQUIRED TO MEET THESE GOALS. END SUMMARY.
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2. CHARGE, CHMEDTC, POL/MIL COUNSELOR AND MEDTC STAFF MET

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WITH FANK COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF MG SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF MG THONGVAN FANMUONG, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR PERSONNEL (ACPER) BG KIM AN DORE ON MARCH 18 TO DISCUSS PROGRESS REGISTERED ON PREVIOUSLY AGREED PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO TRANSFER FANK PERSONNEL TO INTERVENTION UNITS (REF A). WHILE MOST OF NECESSARY DIRECTIVES HAVE BEEN ISSUED, RESPONSES HAVE BEEN POOR AT BEST.

A. OF 1,978 SURPLUS PERSONNEL AT FANK HADQUARTERS, ONLY 439 HAVE BEEN REASSIGNED. THESE WERE ENTIRELY FROM PERSONNEL AND TRAINING BUREAUS WITH MOST OTHER BUREAUS CLAIMING THEY WERE UNDER RATHER THAN OVERSTAFFED BASED ON MISSIONS ASSIGNED. LITTLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN FINDING FANK WOMEN OR COMBAT UNQUALIFIED MEN TO REPLACE HEADQUARTERS CLERICAL STAFF. (SOSTHENE REVEALED IN THIS RESPECT THAT TWO-THIRDS OF FANK'S 6,000 WOMEN ARE ILLITERATE.) AT OUR SUGGESTION, SOSTHENE REDEFINED THE HEADQUARTERS TRANSFER TARGET AS ALL 18-28 YEAR OLD MEN RATHER THAN SURPLUS PERSONNEL AND REQUESTED ALL BUREAU CHIEFS TO PRESENT LISTS OF SUCH PERSONNEL WITHIN FOUR DAYS. THOSE NOT POSSESING ESSENTIAL SKILLS WILL BR REASSIGNED AND REPLACED, IF NECESSARY, BY CIVIL SERVANTS. (FANK HEADQUARTERS HAS UNTIL THIS TIME NOT EMPLOYED CIVILIANS.) SOSTHENE STATED THAT HEADQUARTERS STAFFS OF SUBORDINATE UNITS WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED TO REASSIGN TO COMBAT UNITS UNESSENTIAL 18 - 28 YEAR OLDS.

B. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PHNOM PENH SPECIAL REGION WHICH HAS PROVIDED 937 OF ITS QUOTA OF 3,893 MEN TERRITORIAL AND OTHER UNITS HAVE ALSO RESPONDED POORLY TO THE ORDER THAT THEY FORWARD LISTS OF SURPLUS PERSONNEL TO ACPER FOR TRANSFER TO INTERVENTION UNITS. IN SOME CASES, UNIT COMMANDERS HAVE APPEALED DIRECTLY TO THE MARSHAL FOR RELIEF FROM THE ORDER (WHICH WAS GRANTED IN THE CASE OF THE SPECIAL FORCES). IN THE MEANTIME, THE MARSHAL HAS HIMSELF ASKED EACH MILITARY SUBDIVISION TO PROVIDE ONE COMPANY TO THE INTERVENTION BRIGADES TO BE REPLACED BY LOCAL RECRUITS. THE 1ST AND 2ND REGIONS HAVE RESPONDED THAT NO MEN ARE AVAILABLE. SOSTHENE INDICATED THAT HE WILL PRESS THIS ISSUE WITH SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS. (SEE ALSO PARA 2D AND 3E BELOW).

C. THE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL HOLDING CENTERFOR FANK (CARP)

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HAS DESIGNATED 1,057 OF ITS 2,000 QUOTA FOR THE GENERAL RESERVE BUT ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THESE HAVE IN FACT REPORTED TO THEIR NEW UNITS. INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO DROP MISSING PERSONNEL FROM THE ROLLS IF THEY HAVEN'T REPORTED BY END OF MONTH. SIX TERRITORIAL BATTALIONS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR DEACTIVATION, BUT FINAL DECISION IS PENDING SOSTHENE'S APPROVAL. UNFORTUNATELY, THE ENEMY ATTACK ON OUDONG REQUIRED SOSTHENE TO DISMISS THIS MEETING BEFORE WE WERE ABLE TO BROACH THIS ISSUE, BUT WE

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WILL PRESS FOR REMEDIAL ACTION AT THE FIRST AVAILABLE
OPPORTUNITY.

D. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING THE ORDER WAS ISSUED
TO ASSEMBLE ALL CHIEFS OF FANK STAFF BUREAUS AND REGIONAL
COMMANDERS FOR A CONFERENCE 0930, 19 MARCH 1974. AT THIS
MEETING ALL CONCERNED WERE ISSUED A VERBAL DIRECTIVE BY DEPUTY
CHIEF OF STAFF MG THONGVAN FANMUONG TO COMPLY WITH THE DIRECTIVE
TO FURNISH BY NAME LISTINGS OF OVERSTRENGTH PERSONNEL TO
ACPER, BG DORE.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 4205

EXDIS

3. CHARGE, CHMEDTC, POL/MIL COUNSELOR AND MEDTC STAFF MET WITH
PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET, MINISTER OF DEFENSE MG THAPPANA NGINN,
MINISTER OF INTERIOR CHHANN SOKHUM, CONSCRIPTION CHIEF OF STAFF
BG YONG YOC HANG, NATIONAL GENDARMERIE COMMANDER COL. HEM
SIVETH, AND OTHER OFFICIALS ON MARCH 19 TO REVIEW STATUS OF
CONSCRIPTION EFFORT. AT GENERAL SOSTHENE'S REQUEST, THE
GOVERNORS/MILITARY SUBDISTRICT COMMANDERS OF MOST PROVINCES, WHO
WERE IN PHNOM PENH ON OTHER BUSINESS, JOINED THE MEETING TO
DISCUSS THEIR RECRUITMENT PROBLEMS. SOSTHENE WAS, HOWEVER,
PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING SESSION BY OUDONG EVENTS.

A. MUNICIPAL SECRETARY GENERAL REPORTED THAT THE COMPLETED
CENSUS LISTS 73,353 MEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 35, A 20,000
INCRE E OVER PREVIOUS ROLLS. WHILE THE NUMBER OF THESE WHO

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HAVE ALREADY UJUR#
BOIOU
QKDHF NQGMR QKGQRBXKK#
CONSCRIPTION BASE
SUBSTANTIALLY. MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS ADMITTED, HOWEVER,
THAT SECOND LEVEL DIVISIONS (SANGKATS) HAVE TO DATE SENT
OUT ONLY ABOUT 1,200 DRAFT NOTICES BASED ON THIS LIST. A
TARGET OF 1,500 DRAFT NOTICES PER DAY WAS ACCEPTED BY MUNICI-
PAL AUTHORITIES. BEGINNING MARCH 22, 26 - 35 YEAR OLDS WILL
ALSO BE CONVOKED.
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B. ONE REASON FOR THE LOW ISSUANCE RATE OF DRAFT NOTICES
IS THAT NO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ARE YET BEING CONVOKED PENDING
CLARIFICATION OF THEIR DRAFT STATUS. THE PRIME MINISTER
STATED THAT HE WILL PROPOSE TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THAT
ALL CIVIL SERVANTS, EXCEPT THOSE CLASSIFIED AS ESSENTIAL BY
AN INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE, BE CALLED TO SERVE AND THAT,
FOLLOWING THE PRACTICE IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO
RECEIVE THEIR GOVERNMENTAL SALARIES DURING THE PERIOD OF THEIR
MILITARY SERVICE.

C. RESPONSE TO DRAFT NOTICES HAVE BEEN POOR (OF THOSE 1,200
NOTIFIED ONLY SLIGHTLY OVER 200 MEN HAVE APPEARED AT THEIR DRAFT
BOARDS), WHICH CAN BE ATTRIBUTED IN LARGE PART TO THE ABSENCE OF
ENFORCEMENT MEASURES. ONLY 92 DRAFT DODGERS FROM CURRENT AND
PAST DRAFT CALLS HAVE BEEN PICKED UP SINCE MARCH 6. YONG YOC
HANG REPORTED THAT THE 30MIXED PATROLS HAVE NOW BEEN GIVEN
TRUCKS ON PART-TIME LOAN AND UNDER INTENSIVE REQUESTIONING
NATIONAL GENDARMERIE COMMANDER HEM SIVETH, WHOSE LACK OF ENTHU-
SIASM FOR THIS TASK HAS BEEN A HANDICAP, STATED THAT HIS MEN
WOULD PICK UP EVADERS PROVIDED THEY ARE FURNISHED RELIABLE
INFORMATION. ONLY THREE OF THE 30 SANGKATS, IT WAS REVEALED,
HAVE YET SUBMITTED LISTS OF THOSE FAILING TO REPORT WITHIN
TEN DAYS OF RECEIVING THEIR DRAFT NOTICES. MUNICIPAL
AUTHORITIES PROMISED TO EFFECT BETTER COORDINATION BETWEEN
SANGKATS AND DRAFT BOARDS (AT FIRST DIVISION, KHAND
LEVEL) SO THAT EVADER LISTS CAN BE MORE QUICKLY COMPILED.
TODAY (MARCH 21) SANGKATS WERE DIRECTED TO BEGIN
DISTRIBUTING THESE LISTS TO THE KHAND, CITY AND JOINT
CONSCRIPTION STAFF.

D. ABOUT ONE HALF OF THOSE REPORTING TO THE DRAFT BOARDS ARE
NOW BEING DEFERRED (AND THE PERCENTAGE IS STEADILY RISING)
PRIARILY BECAUSE THEY FALL IN THE STUDENT CATEGORY. THE MEETING
AGREED THAT VERIFICATION OF STUDENT STATUS IS INADEQUATE AND
THE PRIME MINISTER DECIDED THAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WOULD
REQUIRE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO SUPPLY THE CITY'S DRAFT
BOARDS WITH COPIES OF THEIR STUDENT REGISTRATION LISTS FOR CROSS

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CHECKING, IN THE MEANTIME, DRAFT BOARDS WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO VERIFY STUDENT CARDS PRESENTED TO THEM WITH THE SCHOOLS CONCERNED.

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E. ASIDE FROM THE GOVERNOR OF PAILIN, WHO SEEMED ANXIOUS TO PICK UP THE 5,000 DESERTERS AND PERHAPS EVEN LARGER NUMBERS OF DRAFT EVADERS WHO HAVE SOUGHT REFUGE IN HIS ISOLATED, GEN RICH PROVINCE, VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES SAW FEW PROSPECTS FOR PRODUCING MEN FOR PHNOM PENH INTERVENTION UNITS THROUGH A CONSCRIPTION PROGRAM,ALTHOUGH THEY FELT THEY COULD MEET LOCAL MANPOWER NEEDS. AFTER LENGTHY DISCUSSION, THE PRIME MINISTER CONCLUDED THAT THE FANK GENERAL STAFF WOULD REASSIGN EXISTING TERRITORIAL UNITS OF ITS CHOICE TO THE INTERVENTION BRIGADES AND THAT LOCAL COMMANDERS WOULD THEN RECRUIT OR CONSCRIPT REPLACEMENTS. (WE SUBSEQUENTLY OBTAINED LON NOL'S AND SOSTHENE'S CONCURRENCE FOR THIS DECISION). THE JOINT CONSCRIPTION STAFF WAS ALSO DIRECTED TO EFFECT CLOSER LIAISON WITH THE PROVINCIAL CONSCRIPTION COMMITTEES AND TO ASSURE THAT THEY RECEIVED MATERIEL NEEDED TO CONDUCT A CENSUS AND ISSUE DRAFT NOTICES.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THEY TAKE VALUABLE TIME OF THE GKR'S TOP CIVIL AND MILITARY LEADERS, WE HAVE FOUND THAT MEETINGS OF THIS SORT ARE THE BEST MEANS OF AIRING PROBLEMS, FORCING DECISIONS, AND ENSURING THAT DIRECTIVES ARE UNDERSTOOD AND FOLLOWED. IN ADDITION, THEY PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRESS UPON KHMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, IN THIS CASE THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, THE GRAVITY OF THE MANPOWER PROBLEM CONFRONTING THE GKR. SEVERAL OTHER MEETINGS SUCH AS THESE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE REQUIRED BEFORE MANPOWER GOALS ARE MET.
ENDERS

NOTE BY OC/T: PHNOM PENH 4205 SEC 2 OF 2 PARA 3 (A) (##) OMISSION CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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